(b) and (c) The Boeing aircraft are technically equipped not only to undertake short and medium haul domestic flights, but also international flights up to a range of approximately 3000 Nautical Miles. Travel to international destinations beyond that range and operational requirements may necessitate refuelling halts or use of Air India aircraft.

Shortage of pilots in IAF

†3907. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that IAF is facing shortage of pilots;

whether Short Service Commission has been commenced to meet this shortage of pilots; and

if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) At present there are vacancies of pilots in the Indian Air Force (IAF). However, the operational manning requriements of the IAF are being met.

(b) and (c) Earlier only women were eligible for Short Service Commission (SSC) in the Flying branch of the IAF till 2007. In order to overcome the shortage, the IAF has revised the SSC scheme in flying branch to make both men and women eligible for SSC with effect from January, 2008. The salient features of the SSC scheme are that the establishment of SSC Scheme officers (both men and women combined) is revised to 20% of the authorized officers in the flying branch and the term of engagement is 14 years without any further extension. Under the revised scheme 32 cadets (Men) have commenced flying training with effect from January, 2008.

Violation of Indian laws by arms firms

3908. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

whether the competent authority is aware of the report that there are errant firms which indulged in systematic violation of Indian laws in arms deals with Israel;

if so, the details thereof;

whether any step had been taken to contain such violations;

if so, the details thereof; and

if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) There is no specific reference to any report in the question. However, CBI has registered a regular case on ?. 10.2006 in respect of procurement of Barak Anti Missile Defence Systems. Action against he relevant firm would depend on the outcome of the case filed by CBI.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi